

Portfolio EUCI

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Introduction

In recent years, I have had the opportunity to engage in various international experiences that have greatly enriched my personal and professional journey. I have traveled and worked in several countries, each bringing me valuable lessons and unique perspectives. For instance, my work with NGOs in Peru and Madagascar allowed me to understand local development issues and environmental challenges. Similarly, my internships in Costa Rica and Romania offered immersion in diverse professional environments, strengthening my project management and intercultural communication skills.

However, among all these experiences, my stay in Morocco for the last 2 years and the organization of the international conference on migration crises and security challenges stand out significantly. This particular activity marked a turning point in my training and had a deeper impact on me than all the other experiences combined. It was not just an opportunity to travel or work abroad, but a true immersion in a rich and complex culture, requiring constant adaptation and intensive learning. Organizing the international conference in Rabat in November 2023 was a transformative experience on multiple levels. As an international delegate, I faced logistical, cultural, and linguistic challenges

that tested my project management and leadership skills. This experience not only allowed me to develop essential practical skills but also profoundly influenced my vision of international relations and intercultural dynamics.

Morocco, with its rich history and cultural diversity, offered me a unique perspective on migration and security issues. Living and working in this country, I learned to navigate a cultural and religious context very different from that of Europe. Religious norms, social practices, and professional expectations were all new paradigms to understand and integrate into my daily life. This immersion allowed me to develop greater empathy and a better understanding of the issues specific to the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa). Managing this conference involved coordination with partners from diverse cultural backgrounds, including Morocco, France, Italy, Libya, and Tunisia. This diversity enriched the discussions and perspectives addressed during the conference but also required a great capacity for adaptation and mediation on my part. I learned to manage multicultural teams, resolve linguistic misunderstandings, and harmonize often divergent views on sensitive issues such as migration.

Beyond the technical skills and knowledge acquired, this experience has had a lasting impact on how I approach international issues. It allowed me to understand the importance of a holistic and inclusive approach in resolving global crises. By focusing on this experience for my portfolio, I aim not only to share the challenges and successes encountered but also to illustrate how this experience has shaped me as a professional engaged in international affairs.

Challenges upon my arrival in Morocco

Arriving in Morocco presented me with a multitude of challenges that tested my adaptability and resilience. These challenges were not only linguistic but also cultural and personal. Transitioning from a familiar environment in France to the diverse and vibrant context of Morocco required significant adjustments and learning.

The language

Before arriving in Morocco, I had already begun learning classical Arabic in France. However, classical Arabic, mainly used in religious and literary texts, differs greatly from Moroccan dialectal Arabic, which is used daily by the population. Despite a solid linguistic foundation, transitioning to Moroccan Arabic was a real challenge. Moroccan Arabic, with its Berber, French, and Spanish influences, has a specific syntax and vocabulary that require total immersion to master. Initially, the language barrier was significant. Simple conversations in markets, interactions with colleagues, and even understanding local issues required constant translation and adaptation efforts. I had to get used to new expressions, accents, and turns of phrases. To overcome these challenges, I joined local language classes, participated in conversation groups, and practiced regularly with Moroccan friends. Gradually, I noticed significant improvements. Linguistic successes, such as understanding a discussion without

difficulty or being able to express complex ideas, not only boosted my confidence but also facilitated my social and professional integration. The impact of learning Moroccan Arabic on my daily life was immense. It not only allowed me to better understand and appreciate Moroccan culture, but also improved my interactions with locals, reducing misunderstandings and strengthening personal and professional relationships.

Culture and religion

My arrival in Morocco was marked by a gradual discovery of local customs and traditions. Initially, my understanding of Moroccan culture was primarily theoretical, based on readings and testimonies. However, living daily in this country quickly revealed the depth and richness of its culture. For example, religious norms play a central role in daily life. The practice of the five daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and religious holidays rhythm social and professional life. Adapting to these practices, such as scheduling meetings considering prayer times or respecting dietary customs during Ramadan, was essential for successful integration. A memorable experience was my participation in a traditional Moroccan wedding. This event was a complete immersion in local customs, from the henna ceremony to traditional music and dances. I learned to respect and appreciate local traditions, understanding their social and symbolic importance. On the other hand, professional interactions also taught me to navigate an environment where hierarchies and interpersonal relationships are influenced by specific cultural norms. For example, I learned to be more formal in my communications and to value greetings and exchanges of courtesies, which are essential for establishing trustful relationships.

Being a foreigner

Living in Morocco, despite my numerous previous travels, was a profoundly transformative experience. Unlike short stays where one often remains in an observer's position, settling in a new country requires deeper and continuous adaptation. This experience highlighted the challenges and opportunities of living in an environment completely different from my home country. Life in Morocco taught me to be more flexible and open to the unknown. Every day presented a new opportunity to learn and adapt, whether through understanding local administrative systems, integrating into a community, or adjusting to different social norms. This experience also strengthened my ability to navigate complex intercultural contexts. I learned to appreciate cultural diversity and see differences not as obstacles, but as opportunities for mutual learning and enrichment. Moreover, living in Morocco made me aware of the socio-economic and political realities of the Global South, enriching my understanding of international dynamics and issues of migration and security.

Multi-engaged personality, Morocco as a new playground

The transition from completing my undergraduate studies to beginning my Master's program in Conflict Resolution and Peace Governance was a crucial step in my academic journey. After finishing my degree in France, I decided to continue my studies in Morocco, which represented a significant change not only academically but also personally. Transitioning to a Master's program required a more in-depth and analytical approach to subjects, as well as greater autonomy in managing projects and research.

The university: new one for a new man

The academic environment in Morocco is distinguished by a pedagogical approach different from what I was used to in France. For instance, courses in Morocco place more emphasis on local and regional case studies, providing a more contextualized perspective on global issues. Additionally, the difference in subjects studied, shifting from a law degree with a political science focus to a master's program centered on international relations, allowed for intense personal growth. I adopted a more proactive approach by actively participating in class discussions and seeking collaboration opportunities with my colleagues. This involvement allowed me to form valuable connections and build a solid network, which helped me successfully carry out numerous projects. Through this commitment and determination, I graduated top of my class in my first year of the master's program, demonstrating my successful adaptation and ability to excel in a new academic environment.

Extracurricular activities, still active even abroad

In Morocco, my associative involvement was a key element of my experience. As an active member of the Center for Global Studies, I participated in research and projects on global issues such as migration and security. My role included data collection, policy analysis, and report writing. This experience allowed me to deepen my understanding of regional and international dynamics while developing my research and analytical skills. At the same time, I was also involved with the association of Young IHEDN (Institute of Advanced Studies in National Defense). As an international delegate, I participated in organizing conferences and workshops, facilitating exchanges between young professionals and experts from various countries. My responsibilities included logistical coordination, communication with participants, and moderating discussions. As my commitments in Morocco intensified, I gradually had to reduce my involvement in other associations in France. This decision was driven by the need to focus on my new responsibilities and maximize the impact of my actions at the local level. By fully dedicating myself to my engagements in Morocco, I was able to better understand the region's specific issues and contribute more significantly to local projects. Engagement in these organizations had a profound impact on my personal and professional growth. I acquired valuable skills in project management, intercultural communication, and leadership. Working with multicultural teams taught me to navigate diverse

environments and value different perspectives. Moreover, these experiences strengthened my professional network and opened career opportunities in international relations. Outside of my academic and associative commitments, I used my free time to explore Morocco and discover its cultural and geographical richness. Travels and excursions in different regions of the country allowed me to better understand Morocco's diversity, from its landscapes to its traditions.

The international conference on migration security, the pinnacle of my engagement

The conference on migration crises and security challenges, held in Rabat in November 2023, which I organized, was a major event aimed at addressing the complex issues of migration in the context of current security challenges. This event brought together experts, policymakers, NGO representatives, and academics from several countries to discuss the issues, share research, and propose innovative solutions. As an international delegate, I played a crucial role in organizing this conference. My responsibilities included coordinating communications between the various stakeholders, managing logistical aspects, and supervising the project team. The preparation for the conference began several months in advance and took place in several phases. I first selected and led a team composed of members from different nationalities, each bringing unique skills and perspectives. This was done with the assistance of Beatriz Mesa, a professor for whom I was also a research assistant. We held regular meetings to plan the various aspects of the event, from selecting speakers to on-site logistics. I served as a liaison between international and local partners, ensuring smooth and effective communication to guarantee the success of the event.

Challenges and highlights

Managing a multicultural team, including participants from Morocco, France, Italy, Libya, and Tunisia, presented unique challenges. Each person brought their own cultural perspectives, which enriched the discussions but also required great sensitivity and intercultural understanding to avoid misunderstandings. Interactions during the conference were primarily in French, English, and Arabic, adding a layer of complexity to communication. For example, some technical terms and specific concepts of migration and security do not easily translate from one language to another.

One of the most memorable moments of the conference was the roundtable on perceptions of migration between Northern and Southern countries. The animated debates revealed divergences of viewpoints but also led to constructive proposals to improve international cooperation. These moments reminded me of my previous experiences with NGOs in Peru and Madagascar, where understanding local contexts was crucial for project success. Similarly, my internships in Costa Rica and Romania taught me the importance of flexibility and adaptability in multicultural environments, skills that proved invaluable during the conference.

Personal significance of this conference

Organizing this conference had a profound impact on my personal and professional development. It allowed me to strengthen my skills in project management, intercultural communication, and conflict resolution. I also developed a better understanding of global migration and security issues, and how these issues can be addressed collaboratively and inclusively. This experience synthesized and amplified the lessons learned during my other international activities. It showed me the importance of cooperation and communication in multicultural contexts and gave me confidence in my ability to manage complex projects on an international scale. By combining the skills and knowledge acquired over the years, I was able to contribute significantly to the success of this event and to my own professional growth.

Some photo of the conference:





